

Application No. 10/613,375
Response to Office Action of March 11, 2005

Remarks:

1. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 through 26, 28, 29, and 30 are pending. Claims 2 and 5 have been canceled without prejudice. New claims 28, 29, and 30 have been added. Claims 1, 6 through 12, 24, and 25 have been amended in this Response and are presented for further consideration, as amended, in view of the remarks set forth herein. Additionally, Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for allowing claim 26 and for the indication of allowability given to claims 5 through 19 if rewritten in independent form to include all of the characteristics of the base claim and any intervening claims.

2. Original claim 17 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 28. Claim 28 includes each of the elements of original claims 1 and 17 such that no new search is required and no new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully submits that new claim 28 should be allowable since an indication of allowability was given to original claim 17. New dependent claims 29 and 30 include the elements of original claims 18 and 19, respectively.

3. Independent claim 1 stands rejected in the Office Action as considered by the Examiner to be anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,310,426 to Birchak. Pending claims 2 through 4 and 20 through 25 also stand rejected for various reasons as set forth in the Office Action.

4. Independent claims 1, 24, and 25 have been amended to include the element of original claim 5. In particular, amended claims 1, 24, and 25 recite "the elastomeric matrix including a fluoroclastomer material." Support for these amendments is found in claim 5 such that no new search is required and no new matter has been added.

5. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 24, and 25, as amended, now distinguish patentably over the prior art of record (as indicated by the Examiner for original claim 5). Nothing in any of the cited prior art teaches or suggests an acoustic sensor comprising a composite backing layer including a fluoroelastomer material and other claim structure as recited.

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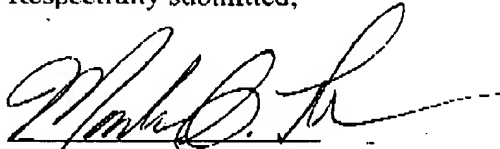
6. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 24, 25, and 28, as amended and added, are patentable over the art of record. Independent claims 1, 25, and 28 being allowable, it follows *a fortiori* that dependent claims 3, 4, 6 through 23, 26, 29, and 30 must also be allowable, since these dependent claims carry with them all the elements of the independent claims to which they ultimately refer.

Applicant believes that in view of the foregoing remarks, pending claims 1, 3, 4, 6 through 26, 28, 29, and 30 are allowable, and that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action Applicant earnestly solicits. Should the Examiner have any questions, or believe that a telephone interview may expedite the further examination of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number shown below.

Date:

6/1/2005

Respectfully submitted,



Mark A. Thurmon
Registry No. 39,858
PathFinder Energy Services, Inc.
15151 Sommermeyer Street
Houston, Texas 77041
(713) 996-1745 Telephone
(713) 996-4164 Facsimile
- Applicant -